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ABSTRACT

This inservice training guide, developed as part of a cooperative project conducted by the Fairfax County, Virginia, Public Schools in conjunction with the Virginia Merit Shop Education Foundation, is intended to assist administrators and planners of apprenticeship training programs. (The apprenticeship program was developed to recruit women, members of minority groups, and English-as-a-Second-Language speakers into eight construction trade apprenticeships.) The guide provides managers with a comprehensive approach to the training process to increase the probability of success. It covers the following topics: need for inservice training, inservice training as a job requirement, goals and objectives, responsible parties, needs assessment, publicity and pretraining mailouts, handouts, establishing a positive atmosphere, training strategies and techniques, training content, evaluating the instructor, resources for inservice training, and evaluating the inservice training. A list of 11 suggested resources is provided. (KC)

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A PARTNERSHIP APPRENTICESHIP

A Guide for Managers of INSERVICE PROGRAMS FOR APPRENTICESHIP RELATED INSTRUCTION

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a joint project of

Office of Adult and Community Education
Fairfax County Public Schools
and Virginia Merit Shop Education Foundation

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INSERVICE PROGRAMS

FOR APPRENTICESHIP RELATED INSTRUCTION

A Guide for Managers

Prepared By
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For

Office of Adult and Continuing Education
Fairfax County Public Schools
&
Virginia Merit Shop Education Foundation

A Joint Project

Funded by
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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PREFACE

In 1988, the Fairfax County Public Schools Office of Adult and Community Education was awarded an eighteen month cooperative Demonstration Grant from the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education. The objectives of the grant were to encourage the participation of women, minorities, and limited-English speakers in apprenticeship training in eight construction trades. This project is in partnership with the Virginia Merit Shop Education Foundation, a not-for-profit arm of the Associated Builders and Contractors, which promotes apprenticeship training and provides continuing education for the construction industry.

This Inservice Training Guide, developed as part of the grant requirements, is intended to assist administrators and planners of apprenticeship training programs. It draws on the experience Fall 1989 apprenticeship instructor's inservice program as well as material from several other training guides (see "Suggested Resources").

The objectives of this guide are to:

- provide you with a comprehensive approach to the training process to increase the probability of success
- expand your knowledge of the elements needed for effective program design
- encourage you to explore a variety of training techniques
- present methods for discovering creative solutions to training problems
- share examples of effective training activities
- suggest approaches for fighting system problems

For further information on the apprenticeship training program, please contact

The Apprenticeship Related Instruction Office
7510 Lisle Avenue
Falls Church, VA 22043

INTRODUCTION

The Fairfax County Public Schools Apprenticeship Related Instruction Program annually serves more than 2000 apprentices in Northern Virginia, offering instruction related to approximately 20 different trades. Inservice training for the more than 100 part-time instructors needed to teach related instruction classes is a significant component of the overall program.

The 1989 inservice program focused on the importance of addressing the special needs of students who came from a variety of educational and cultural backgrounds. Cross-cultural training emphasized that different cultural backgrounds can influence behavior -- both on the job and in the classroom. In addition, a presentation about women in the workplace provided the instructors, who are largely male, insight into the isolation women feel in non-traditional fields.

Our findings emphasize the growing awareness that instructor attitudes and behaviors are critical factors in student retention. In addition, the changing makeup of the student population reflects the growing representation of Hispanic and Asian immigrants who have located in Northern Virginia and, increasingly, the presence of women who are entering non-traditional jobs.

Because substance abuse poses a serious problem in the trades where safety is a primary consideration, the instructors were shown a video on drug abuse and its physical and psychological effects. Instructors also received information and guidance on grading and student evaluation, audio visual resources, class scheduling and support services available to students for tutoring and remedial work.

1. **NEED FOR INSERVICE TRAINING**

The large majority of apprenticeship instructors consider themselves journeyworkers or master mechanics first and instructors a distant second. Rare is the instructor who has any background in education as a discipline or experience in teaching. For most, inservice training is the only place they are exposed to successful teaching techniques and information on adult learning styles. Therefore, inservice training is a critical component in maintaining the quality of the instructional program as well as ensuring its success.

In addition, inservice training may be the only opportunity for apprenticeship instructors to meet with the chief administrator in the sponsoring organization as well as the adult school principals and other staff who help facilitate the program. Instructors also benefit from meeting each other and learning what other instructors teach, what the principal's responsibilities are in relation to the classroom, whom to talk to regarding curriculum

changes, what the options are for grading and testing, and whom to call for assistance. It may also be their only opportunity to understand the apprenticeship process in terms of how it fits into the workplace/educational institution relationship.

2. INSERVICE TRAINING AS A JOB REQUIREMENT

One of the most difficult administrative aspects of the inservice program is to secure maximum staff participation. Because inservice training is so critical to the overall success of the apprenticeship program, it should be viewed by the sponsoring organization and the instructor as a job requirement. It should be kept in mind that these instructors are tradespeople first, many of whom are self-employed. Expecting them to attend inservice because it will improve teaching skills may not be sufficient motivation. Therefore, the instructors should be paid to attend and should be evaluated on their attendance.

While money is no doubt a proven stimulus to participation, it is however, not the only motivator. Increasing belief in the worth of personal development has frequently promoted participation as well. The design of the program also has considerable effect on its acceptance.

3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of any training effort is to enable the trainee to perform to capacity. Because each apprenticeship instructor brings a unique set of experiences and ideas to the classroom, in-service should assist the new instructor in the transition from skilled tradesperson to instructor without undermining individual style.

A secondary goal of inservice training is to build morale. This is largely achieved by providing the instructors with a clear understanding of the operational and philosophical objectives of the organization for which they are working. Therefore, an overview of apprenticeship and its guiding principles, the theoretical bases for teaching adults, and the educational mission of the sponsoring organization should be included in the inservice training.

Objectives include the following:

- defining the instructor's role and responsibilities in terms of fulfilling the overall program objectives and achieving the expected outcomes
- improving understanding of adult learning styles and characteristics
- developing the concept of a team effort, which would include instructors and administrative personnel
- providing opportunities for continuing professional development in subject matter areas

- o developing sensitivity to instructional problems unique to adult education, including the problems associated with cultural and linguistic diversity
- o developing a wider range of classroom teaching techniques.

Clearly, no single plan or model will fit the needs of all inservice programs. Rigid inservice programs, carried out in a perfunctory way, will be counterproductive. Only a vital, open approach to inservice education can pay real dividends in the overall quality and effectiveness of the instructional program.

4. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Planning Committee. Designating a planning committee for the inservice can provide several bonuses: support for the total program, expertise in designing the program, and a shared workload.

The committee should include new and current instructors, administrators, adult education staff from other programs who have successfully conducted inservice training, and representatives of the business community.

The planning committee is responsible for advising the program administrators in such areas as needs assessment, pre-training publicity, scheduling and facilities, training format and content, and evaluation methods. The committee chair should have the authority to delegate tasks and carry out recommendations. Although the planning committee should

be given a free hand, it should be provided a written statement of the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the apprenticeship program as well as budget limitations and other constraints. Each member of the planning committee should be assigned a task at the inservice, e.g. registration, set-up, etc.

The committee should be convened early enough to provide sufficient preparation time, preferably six months in advance of the inservice. The committee should meet several times so that members keep on task, they should be provided with an agenda and there should be ample time for discussion.

Program Administrators/Managers. The program administrators are responsible for implementing the inservice training program, based on the recommendations of the planning committee.

5. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Needs can be assessed based on research and experience. In addition, a needs assessment questionnaire mailed out to the prospective instructors can be used to assess training needs. It should include both a list of possible training topics and open-ended questions to elicit responses from instructors. Suggested areas which could be used to identify specific needs might include teaching methods, teaching aids, student motivation, and communication skills.

In addition, instructors should be polled as to the most convenient time and place for the inservice. Many will not want to meet on a Saturday, as that may be a work day. Two consecutive evenings, or two evening sessions one week apart may be more convenient.

6. PUBLICITY AND PRE-TRAINING MAILOUTS

Needs assessment questionnaire. (see above). This questionnaire should be mailed out three months prior to training and should include a stamped, return envelope. Instructors should be asked to return the questionnaire within two weeks of mailout.

Agenda and registration materials. An attractively designed and printed agenda, including the names of the planning committee and the administrative staff and a map of the training site, should be mailed one month in advance, with registration materials to be returned within two weeks.

Instructor Handbook. A handbook covering policies of the sponsoring organization and how instructors fit into the overall organizational picture, payroll procedures, required record keeping (such as grading and attendance), student evaluation forms, instructional equipment, class cancellation procedures, phone numbers of key staff, etc. should be mailed to all registrants two weeks in advance of the training.

Reminder. A second reminder should accompany the handbook.

7. **HANDOUTS**

In addition to the mailouts, these materials should be available at the inservice:

Agenda
Handbook
Nametags
Materials for note-taking

8. **ESTABLISHING A POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE**

To ensure full participation, training should be conducted in a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere. Starting the program with a motivational speaker can create a positive climate while conveying a mission statement in an enjoyable and entertaining manner. This kind of speaker can set the tone for an enjoyable and educational session.

Chairs and tables can be arranged to facilitate discussion. For example, instructors can be grouped at tables by trade wearing name tags which identify them by trade and course level.

Meals also can encourage a relaxed atmosphere. Serving the meal in a separate room or area would give instructors a break for informal conversation.

Time should be provided on the agenda for experienced instructors to share their expertise informally with the newer instructors. The chance to learn about actual teaching problems from those who have negotiated them successfully is invaluable.

9. TRAINING STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

First and foremost, it is essential that the training staff practice what they preach.

Hands-on/Practice Teaching. As roughly 15% of the instructors in the Fairfax County program are new each year, it can be assumed that they will need hands-on exposure to the mechanics of successful teaching techniques. Veteran instructors also can benefit from updating their teaching skills in a practice setting, giving them an opportunity to unlearn boring or ineffective teaching techniques.

During the inservice program, each instructor should have the chance to teach a session or lead a discussion. It is often helpful to use an actual teaching unit, offering the opportunity for discussion and analysis. This learning-by-doing approach is often more instructive than a theoretical approach to teaching techniques. Effective training requires that people practice what they have learned before they apply it.

Master Classes. Experienced instructors can model a variety of effective teaching techniques, demonstrating respect for the students, using peer teaching, providing a comfortable setting, etc.

Pairing. Less experienced instructors should be paired with more experienced instructors for sessions involving worksheets for problem solving or preparing lesson plans. Encourage the instructors to use one another as resources.

Forum for Discussion. It may be desirable to provide a forum for discussion following formal presentations in addition to informal workshops or small discussion groups.

Relevance. Inservice training should be directly related to the instructor's task in order to satisfy the basic need of adult learners for relevancy. Adults learn best when they can link new knowledge and skills to those previously learned, which helps explain the success of the age-old apprenticeship system.

10. TRAINING CONTENT/STANDARD

Standard training should cover areas which would be applicable to most training situations, such as an explanation of the usefulness of instructional materials. Standard topics might include:

Special Resources. Although it is assumed that the instructors hired to participate in this program have demonstrated their expertise, it is impossible to be an expert in all phases of a trade. Instructors are, therefore, encouraged to bring in experts in specific areas. Administrators of related instruction can help in providing instructors with information on additional classroom resources.

Teaching Techniques. Stressing the importance of careful lesson planning, geared to the capabilities of the class, is essential. Instructors should be encouraged to be in class on time, before the students arrive, with materials and equipment ready for presentation. They should be made aware of the research materials available which deal with individual learning styles and which emphasize the need for variety in teaching methods and techniques. For example, research shows that students may learn by listening, observing, reading, or a combination of the three, while some learn best by doing -- necessitating laboratory facilities or hands-on opportunities in the classroom.

Human Relations. Apprenticeship instructors often need to be encouraged to be more student centered, rather than subject-matter centered. Instructors should understand the importance of building a relationship of mutual respect, and developing a sense of rapport, with their students -- giving them their full attention, listening to them carefully, observing their behavior, asking the right questions, and being sensitive to those students who need encouragement and praise.

The Use and Development of Instructional Aids. Once they understand their usefulness, instructors may want to develop their own teaching aids. If instructors are going to be

developing their own teaching materials, such as flip charts and transparencies, they should be shown how to use them most effectively. They should also be supplied with the necessary materials or information on how to obtain them. In addition, they should receive instruction/demonstrations in how to develop instructional materials. Many instructors will be surprised to learn that creating transparencies and flip charts is a relatively simple and quick process.

Instructors should also be informed of the availability of other types of instructional materials, including textbooks, handouts, manuals, videos, slides, workbooks, course outlines, teaching guides, standardized tests, etc.

Demonstrations of new equipment are stimulating additions to the program. Instructors should be encouraged to increase and vary their teaching techniques through the use of technology.

Safety. Safety in the classroom is a major consideration, especially for apprenticeship instructors. It should be stressed to instructors that machinery and hand tools must be in good working order, complete with safety guards.

Grading. Apprenticeship instructors need to be informed of appropriate testing procedures and how to accurately assess student progress. Guidelines for grading should be clear so they can be properly adhered to.

11. TRAINING CONTENT/OPTIONAL

Optional topics should be covered in response to the information obtained from the needs assessment questionnaire. Any legitimate concern involving the apprenticeship program is appropriate subject matter for the inservice program. Possible topics might include:

- techniques for handling problem situations, such as learning blocks, the silent learner, preserving student self-esteem
- demographic characteristics of the adult student population and how to work successfully with new and diverse populations
- characteristic adult learning styles: shedding incorrect images of instruction based on a child-learner model
- using students as resources
- dealing with instructor "stage fright"

12. EVALUATING THE INSTRUCTOR

Instructors should understand the role of evaluation tools and methods. Student evaluation forms, team observations, and self-evaluation instruments are important parts of instructor feedback. A well constructed evaluation can yield extremely helpful data and provide valuable information about which aspects of the training worked and to what degree.

13. RESOURCES FOR INSERVICE TRAINING

Presenters and materials can be obtained from a variety of sources. Investigate other departments within your organization as well as local agencies or institutions of higher education, and professional associations. Various organizations have speakers bureaus with lists of resource persons for many topics. In-house employee assistance programs can offer high quality presentations on such topics as substance abuse.

The organization sponsoring apprenticeship instruction may have other departments responsible for professional development, with experienced staff who can offer valuable assistance in planning inservice programs. Use the planning committee to help identify presenters based on the feedback from the needs assessment questionnaire.

14. EVALUATING THE INSERVICE

A useful evaluation plan includes both formal and informal evaluation. Any questionnaires used should be tied to the objectives of the training established by the administrators and planning committee. Training facilitators (staff and planning committee members) should solicit and record participant comments for later use.

The evaluation questionnaire should be liberally sprinkled with why and what questions: Why was each part good? poor? average? What was most useful to you and why? What is the most needed additional item for future training?

A special inservice program for new instructors, providing basic orientation and assistance, should be considered. This could be offered prior to the general inservice, individually or in a small group, or in conjunction with the inservice. Audio-visual material such as "Train the Trainers" videos may be helpful for those new to the classroom setting.

CONCLUSION

The basic thesis of this handbook is that the instructional delivery of apprenticeship teachers can be modified in directions desired by the system through effective programs of development. Therefore, program managers have the prime responsibility for advocating and implementing quality in-service programs.

By continuing to learn, adult instructors remain flexible. A carefully planned inservice, which meets the needs of the instructors and, ultimately, the students, goes a long way towards achieving the goals of the overall program. Program managers and apprenticeship instructors who participate in well-conducted inservice programs consistently praise the experience. More importantly, they have reported positive changes in the quality of training they develop as a direct result of these programs.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Adult Learning Principles Workshop
Fisher, Sharon G. (Instructor Guide). Human Resource Development Press, Inc. Amherst, MA

Business and Industry Unit
American Association for Adult and Continuing Education. 1201 16th Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 --Professional services

Center on Education and Training, Ohio State University, 1900 Kenny Road, Columbus OH 43210

From Surviving to Thriving! How to Teach Adults
Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Stillwater, OK, 1988

Handbook for Teachers of Adult Vocational Education
Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, 1980. Stillwater, OK

How to Develop and Present Staff Training Courses
Peter R. Sheal, Nichols Publishing, New York, NY

How to Teach Adults in One Hour, William A. Draves, Learning Resources Network, Manhattan, KS 1988. (Paperback and video).

Learning to Teach Practical Skills 2/E
Ian Winfield ISBN 089397-292-4 (Paperback)

Performance-Based Teacher Education Modules
(404) 542-2586
Category N: Teaching Adults
American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials-The University of Georgia--Athens, GA.

Techniques for Instructors in Adult Education
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1979. Jefferson City, MO

Train-The-Trainer,Ittner, Penny L. and Douds, Alex F., Instructor's Guide and Coursebook. Human Resource Development Press, Amherst, MA